

Questions and Answers

Most recent questions and answers are posted at the end.

1. Question: Is the use of this contract mandatory for all organizations within the Department of the Navy?

Government Response: The NMCI will be the sole intranet for the DoN.

2. Question: Will all funding expended by the Department of the Navy during the term of this contract for the types of services set forth in the scope of this contract be allotted to this contract exclusively? During the term of the NMCI contract, will any organization within the Department of the Navy have the right to procure services set forth in the scope of the NMCI contract from other existing contracts--such as *GSA Seat Management*, *GSA Schedules*, or other information technology contracts? During the term of the NMCI contract, will any organization within the Department of the Navy have the right to issue a new procurement for any services set forth in the scope of the NMCI contract from a source other than the NMCI contractor?

Government Response: It is our intention that the contract resulting from this solicitation provide complete end-to-end information technology services for the DoN. The Government guarantees, subject to the availability of funds, that it will procure at least the minimum quantities specified in Tables 1 and 2 of the solicitation from the NMCI prime contractor.

3. Question: There are several clauses in the Solicitation that are captioned "**(MANDATORY)**." Is it true that the Government must reject any proposal that asks to modify or delete the "**(MANDATORY)**" provisions as non-responsive to mandatory requirements?

Government Response: The clauses marked mandatory may not be modified or deleted. Any proposal which proposes to modify or delete mandatory clauses will be determined to be unacceptable in accordance with the requirements of the solicitation.

4. Question: Most clauses in the Solicitation that are not captioned "**(MANDATORY)**." Is it true that the Government will consider for award any proposal that asks to modify or delete clauses that are not "**(MANDATORY)**?"

Government Response: Offerors should provide alternative "optimal solution" proposals which deviate from the terms and conditions of the RFP only in those areas described in Section 1.1 of the Instructions to Offerors regarding such alternative proposals. However, the Government will entertain suggested changes in other non-mandatory terms and conditions as part of the discussion process.

Reference: *Solicitation Page 24, Provision 6.3 FAR 52.216-22 Indefinite Quantity (Oct 1995) (Mandatory):* "FAR 52.216-22 (b)The Government **shall order** at least the quantity of supplies or services designated in the Schedule as the "minimum." (Emphasis added.)

5. Question: What is the "minimum" specified in the Schedule?

Government Response: The values provided in Tables 1 and 2 as shown in upcoming amendment of the solicitation are the minimum quantities.

6. Question: Is the "Minimum Basic Contract Quantity" in TABLE ONE (beginning at page 4 of Solicitation) the "minimum" quantity referred to in FAR 52.216-22, paragraph (b), for purposes of the base period of the contract?

Government Response: Yes

7. Question: Is the "Minimum Basic Contract Quantity" in TABLE TWO (beginning at page 7 of Solicitation) the "minimum" quantity referred to in FAR 52.216-22, paragraph (b) for purposes of the option period of the contract?

Government Response: Yes

8. Question: *Solicitation Page 24, Provision 6.3 FAR 52.216-22 Indefinite Quantity (Oct 1995) (Mandatory):* This clause is prescribed by FAR 16.506(e). FAR 16.506(b) states: "(b) The contracting officer shall insert a clause substantially the same as the clause at 52.216-19, Order Limitations, in solicitations and contracts when a definite-quantity contract, a requirements contract, or **an indefinite-quantity contract** is contemplated." (Emphasis added) Does the Government intend to include a clause substantially the same as FAR 52.216-19, Order Limitations, in the Solicitation?

Government Response: No. This solicitation is governed by FAR Part 12, and the FAR 15.506(b) prescription does not apply to actions under FAR Part 12.

Reference: Solicitation part 1 page 16 and part 2 paragraph 6.18, Associate Contractor Agreement - Please clarify the Navy's intentions for the Associate Contractor Award:

9. Question: Under what conditions does the Government intend to authorize NMCI performance by the Associate Contractor?

Government Response: If the resultant contract is terminated by either party for any reason (see FAR 52.212-4), the Government intends to authorize NMCI performance by the associate contractor.

10. Question: Would the Government entertain striking the term “supplement” from the language in the paragraph for Item 0037 on page 16? The word supplement implies that there would be a multiple award versus a single award.

Government Response: We agree; the term supplement will be removed from the language in Item 0037 as well as the same language which appears in Part Four in an upcoming amendment to the solicitation.

11. Question: Contractor assumes that the award to the Associate Contractor would include the Minimum Basic Contract Quantities. Please validate the assumption that any award to an Associate Contractor will include support of full scope service delivery for the total scope of all Minimum Basic Contract Quantities.

Government Response: Any award to the associate contractor would include support of the full scope service delivery for the total scope of all remaining program year(s)’ minimum quantities for Items 0001 through 0005. The scope for the other items may depend on stage of delivery.

12. Question: What is the expected state of the prime contract when the Navy authorizes performance by the Associate Contractor?

Government Response: The prime contract will have been terminated in accordance with 52.212-4 prior to authorized performance by the associate contractor.

13. Question: How will the Associate Contractor scope be implemented and integrated into service delivery?

Government Response: Offerors that submit a proposal for deferred award are expected to submit, as part of their proposal, its integration plan into the prime contract. An upcoming amendment will specifically request this as part of instructions to offerors.

14. Question: How would the Government implement the change and what effect would such implementation have on Minimum Basic Contract Quantities, pricing, SLAs and other terms and conditions including third party indemnification related to the integrated delivery.

Government Response: Again, Offerors that submit a proposal for deferred award are expected to submit, as part of their proposal, an implementation plan into the prime contract. An upcoming amendment will specifically request this as part of instructions to offerors.

15. Question: Does the Government expect to award only a single deferred award or are multiple associate contractors possible?

Government Response: The Government expects to award only one deferred award.

Reference: Attachment 1, section 2.2, Voice Seats - The statement “After contract award, operations and maintenance of the existing voice infrastructure shall be the responsibility of the contractor” raises the following questions:

16. Question: Provide details governing the expected contractual, working and reporting relationship(s) between and among the contractor, the Government and the current providers of legacy voice systems, particularly as they relate to attainment of or excuse from SLAs.

Government Response: The Government expects the details governing the expected relationships to be proposed by offerors as part of its transition plan. The Government doesn’t expect to excuse any SLA requirements; rather we are soliciting your proposal for integrating or transitioning from legacy voice systems while meeting the SLAs.

17. Question: Provide a list of current suppliers, applicable SLAs, documented performance against those SLAs for the most recent six months, financial and contractual obligations of existing providers, term(s) of existing relationship(s), current capacity and utilization for legacy voice systems, a service definition detailing the Government’s expectations of the contractor and the timeframe expected by the Government for legacy voice systems transition to NMCI.

Government Response: The Government does not have the data requested. The Government expects offerors to propose a timeframe which provides the most efficient and best value to the DoN for voice systems.

18. Question: Where should pricing for legacy voice systems be placed in Table 1 (Pricing)?

Government Response: All legacy voice systems, if maintained, will be priced under Item 0029 at the time of order. Any assumptions should be fully described in the offerors’ proposals.

19. Question: What, if anything, in the current legacy voice systems should not be used in the NMCI solution.

Government Response: We are expecting offerors to propose an NMCI solution. We specifically want offerors to propose a solution which provides to us the best value. The decision to maintain current systems or transition is the offeror’s.

20. Question: Solicitation section 1, page 2, Definition of IOC is defined only for data seats and services. Please provide the definition of IOC for voice and video services, as well.

Government Response: That paragraph will be modified in an upcoming amendment to read: The Initial Operational Capability (IOC) of the NMCI is defined as every Navy and Marine Corps user having the ability to order and receive all data services of the NMCI by the end of CY01. The Full Operational Capability (FOC) is defined as every Navy and Marine Corps user having the ability to order and receive all NMCI services by the end of CY02."

Reference: Solicitation part 2, paragraph 6.20, Order of Precedence and Solicitation part 3, page 36, List of Attachments

21. Question: Listed item (10) in this order of precedence includes "Other documents, exhibits, and the remaining attachments" while part 3 identifies Attachments 11 through 15 as information only. This would imply that NMCI Contractor and system performance is not required to be compliant to these documents. However, by placing them in the contractual order of precedence, the Government indicates that compliance is required. Please clarify the intended use of the information-only attachments and their role in the contractual order of precedence.

Government Response: We agree; the informational documents will be removed from the order of precedence in an upcoming amendment as they do not require compliance.

22. Question: Solicitation part 4, paragraph 1.3.6 requires the NMCI Contractor include all 15 attachments, including the information-only documents, to our proposed contract. Since part 3 identifies attachments 11 through 15 as information only, please identify the correct application of the attachments.

Government Response: The documents are informational in nature. The purpose is to describe possible situations and/or solutions. Since they are not compliance documents, they will not be made part of the contract. The need to return the documents as part of the proposed contract will be deleted in the upcoming amendment.

Reference: Part One (Pages 14, 15 and 16) - The Solicitation reads in part, that Items 0014, 0028, 0029, 0032, 0033, and 0036, will be priced separately in individual orders. Part Four (Page 43/ Section 1.3.6) reads: Parts One, Two, Three and Six of this solicitation, with all blanks filled in. Note: Part One includes Tables 1 and 2

23. Question: Will the contractor be required to price the above referenced Items and complete Tables 1 and 2 during the initial proposal submission? OR Will the contractor be required to price the Items after contract award in individual orders?

Government Response: Offerors are not required to submit a price for the items which state that they will be priced separately in individual orders.

24. Question: Section 6.0 Special Terms and Conditions and Part Four Instructions to Offerors - Section 6.0 of the solicitation requires a Small Business Subcontracting Plan in accordance with FAR Part 52.219-9. Part Four (page 37) of the solicitation requires a Small and Small Disadvantaged Business Participation Plan. Is the offeror required to submit a “Small Business Subcontracting Plan” and a “Small and Small Disadvantaged Business Participation Plan” for evaluation?

Government Response: They are one and the same; offerors are required to submit a Small and Small Disadvantaged Business Plan in accordance with FAR 52.219-9.

Reference: Part Four Instructions to Offerors - Section 1.3.3 Small and Small Disadvantaged Business Participation (page 42) of the solicitation states “As part of the Small and Small Disadvantaged Business Participation Plan, Offerors shall identify all subcontractors for any subcontract which has been established.”

25. Question: Will the offeror be allowed to name as part of the Small and Small Disadvantaged Business Participation Plan, all teammates that the offeror has entered into teaming arrangements with for this procurement?

Government Response: Offerors are not only allowed, but are encouraged to submit all team member information with the proposals. The Government expects that all information which supports the offerors commitment to a successful NMCI will be submitted.

26. Question: Can the offeror provide copies of the teaming agreements entered into with other vendors as part of the written proposal?

Government Response: Again, any information which demonstrates the offerors commitment to a successful NMCI should be provided.

27. Question: In places, the NMCI Infrastructure includes DISN as part of the infrastructure (mandatory for use without receiving a waiver), but in other areas it refers to networks like NIPRNET and SIPRNET, as extranets to the NMCI infrastructure. How does the Government define “NMCI Infrastructure”?

Government Response: NMCI infrastructure is determined (and proposed) by the contractor “within the base” and by contractor engineering effort in conjunction with DoN and DISA “outside the base.” The intention is for “outside the base” infrastructure requirements to be satisfied as much as possible by use of the existing DISN. However, if the existing DISN does not support meeting NMCI requirements, then the Contractor will engineer a solution with commercial augmentation. Subject to Government approval, the Contractor will put in place the additional “outside the base” infrastructure, which will become functionally part of the DISN.

28. Question: Is the baseline amount of file storage associated with a NMCI seat or is it associated with a user account?

Government Response: File storage is associated with a user account.

29. Question: Part Four – Instructions to Offerors, page 37 - The RFP states that electronic copies are to be submitted on 3.5” floppy disks. As an alternative, is it acceptable to submit electronic versions on CDs?

Government Response: Offerors may submit electronic versions on CD.

30. Question: Part Four - Instructions to Offerors - Request clarification on how the Government can obtain “fair and open” competition for this procurement, with AT&T as the provider of services on the DISN backbone. AT&T can propose a lower operating cost of the DISN in its team members’ proposal, an option not available to all prime bidders. In our opinion, this gives AT&T and its team an unfair competitive advantage. AT&T should be restricted from signing an exclusive agreement with any prime. It is recommended that AT&T be designated a trusted agent, as the provider of a mandatory service (the DISN).

Government Response: The DISN will be provided at no cost to the NMCI prime contractor. Accordingly, all offerors’ proposals should reflect no cost for DISN usage, which provides a fair playing field for all interested competitors.

31. Question: Attachment 1, Statement of Objectives, page 17 - “The contractor shall use only Public Key Infrastructure (PKI)-enabled servers.” Does the current SOO refer to “private Web servers” or to all servers?

Government Response: The Contractor shall use only PKI-enabled servers inside the external security boundary.

32. Question: Attachment 2 – Industry standard Target Performance Measures – SLAs 1, 2, and 3 have no levels of service identified. Is the Contractor to assume that B, HE and MC apply?

Government Response: Yes

33. Question: Attachment 2 – Industry standard Target Performance Measures – SLAs 25, 27, and 35 have the levels of service identified as 2. Is the Contractor to assume that only HE and MC apply?

Government Response: No; see the amended Attachment 2.

34. Question: Attachment 2 – Industry standard Target Performance Measures - For SLA 28, the level of service has been identified as 1. Is the Contractor to assume that only B apply?

Government Response: No; see the amended Attachment 2.

35. Question: Attachment 2 – Industry standard Target Performance Measures (SLA 10 – PC 2, 11 – PC 2, and SLA 12 – PC 2) - Given the security posture of NMCI, there may be delays inherent in the security architecture. Does the 80ms reflect a robust security architecture as required by NMCI?

Government Response: Yes; the metric includes all components from end to end. The typographical error has been corrected in an amendment (the second LOSS(1) should read LOS(2)).

Reference: Attachment 18

36. Question: What is the expected time frame for the demonstration?

Government Response: The time frame for the demonstration will be during the due diligence period. The exact time frame will be provided at the start of discussions.

37. Question: Will there be a set period of time allotted for the demonstration? If so, please specify how much time will be allotted.

Government Response: The exact time frame and other rules for the demonstration will be provided at the start of discussions.

38. Question: Will this be a one-time demonstration, or should the demonstration be available for an extended period of time to permit further evaluation?

Government Response: The Government intends for this to be a one-time demonstration; however, the rules for the demonstration will be provided at the start of discussions.

39. Question: Please provide us with a list of companies which will be proposing as a prime contractor.

Government Response: The solicitation is only available electronically with interested sources pulling copies from the NMCI website. No copies of the RFP have been sent directly to anyone. Accordingly, we do not have a list of interested primes. A list of interested sources (including prime and sub-contractors) is provided on the NMCI website.

40. Question: What is the purpose of the Organization Conflict of Interest letter shown in Part Four, Instructions to Offerors? Is there a specific format?

Government Response: Any offeror that has concern with the companies' (shown at the beginning of Part Five) participation in the evaluation should forward a letter in its own format by 19 January 2000. Additionally, any offeror that thinks there may have been or may be any other conflict of interest for its participation in this procurement should also forward that information to the Government.

41. Question: Should the alternate proposal for the optimal solution have the assumption that no infrastructure exists within DoN?

Government Response: Yes.

42. Question: Solicitation Document Executive Summary: "In addition, all existing infrastructure at these sites may be made available for use by the Contractor in providing the complete IT infrastructure." Is the government providing current infrastructure as GFE? Other language suggests the assumption of no infrastructure is strictly meant for performance reasons and not costing. Is this a correct interpretation?

Government Response: Offerors are to assume that no infrastructure exists for the first round of proposals. Technical and price proposals should reflect this

assumption. The provision of existing infrastructure will be addressed during discussions and due diligence.

43. Question: Solicitation Document Part One – Continuation of SF1449: Table One – Items: 0006, 0012,0013, 0016 ,0017, 0020-0022, 0024-0026, 0030, 0031, 0034. What is the Government’s expectation for a response regarding those items in the price tables for which no quantities are provided? Is the provider to use a minimum quantity of 1 as the evaluated quantity?

Government Response: Offerors should provide the price for one unit, and must clearly describe any assumptions made in their proposal.

44. Question: Solicitation Document Part One – Continuation of SF1449: Table One – Items 0014 and 0015. Will the Government please clarify the meaning of a "VTC Seat" as that term applies to Items 0014 and 0015? For these Items, should we equate a "VTC seat" to a "VTC system" on a one-for-one basis? Or, should we assume that each Fixed or Moveable VTC system can support more than one seat, e.g., a typical Fixed (room-based) VTC system supports 6-12 seats in a VTC room? Will the Government please clarify the meaning of a "Moveable VTC Seat?" Does this mean a single-monitor VTC system on a roll-around cart that can be wheeled into any room of a building where it will serve as many people as are seated there? Or, does this mean a suitcase-based VTC system that serves primarily one end user?

Government Response: Items 0014 and 0015 are described in the item descriptions. The unit of purchase for VTC service categories shall be referred to as a “seat” and means an installed service delivery point. Moveable means “mobility and easy relocation.” The VTC that primarily serves one end user would better match Item 0022, Desktop VTC, which is optional for Items 0001 through 0004.

45. Question: Solicitation Document Part One - Continuation of SF1449: Table One – Item descriptions for 0014, 0019: “This item will be separately priced in individual orders.” Quantities are provided for these Items. Is the offeror expected to provide a price in the price tables at this time? If so, is there a common base configuration for evaluation purposes for which to price?

Government Response: All items which state “This item will be separately priced in individual orders” will be priced following award upon placement of individual orders.

Reference: Solicitation Document Part One – Continuation of SF1449: Table – Item 0023.

46. Question: It is the offeror's understanding that a catalog is not expected to be submitted at this time since the catalog would be in support of specialized items that are TBD. Is this interpretation correct? Is the contractor to provide a catalog at time of submission, or will the catalog items be established after award and prior to start?

Government Response: Offerors are expected to submit a catalog with the proposal submission.

47. Question: Solicitation Document Part Two – Contract Clauses, Terms, and Conditions: Section 2.1 – Limitations of Government obligation: Does Provision 2.1 of the RFP limit the recovery of unamortized costs in the event that minimum quantities are not ordered in a contract year?

Government Response: Section 2.1 is not intended to limit any recovery by the Contractor in the event that the Navy does not order the specified minimum quantities. This provision simply recognizes the fact that the contract may be incrementally funded.

48. Question: Solicitation Document Part Two – Contract Clauses, Terms, and Conditions - Sec 6.14.2 - Customer Satisfaction - "If service is rated above the industry average by more than x%: \$x/seat/quarter": Should the statements instead read, "If service is rated above the industry average by more than x% of the users: \$x/seat/quarter"?

Government Response: Yes, that is the assumption.

49. Question: Solicitation Document Part Two – Contract Clauses, Terms, and Conditions - Section 6.3 - FAR 5.2.216-22 FAR Part 17.104(a) Indefinite Quantity: Under FAR Part 17.104(a), Multi Year contracting is defined as method to acquire known quantities. This provision seems to conflict with the clause at 6.3 of the Solicitation, FAR 52.216-22 Indefinite Quantity. Are the minimum quantities listed in Part 1 guaranteed in accordance with the Multi-Year Contracting provisions of FAR Part 17?"

Government Response: The minimum quantities listed in the tables are guaranteed, subject to the provisions of Part Two (Availability of Funds and Cancellation under Multi-Year Contracts).

50. Question: Attachment 1 – SOO - Paragraph 2.2 - "The contractor shall provide operator services to include directory assistance (i.e. 411), 911 capabilities, and operator assisted calling": Does the government want such operator calls handled directly by the Public Switch Telephone Network (PSTN) operators or by an NMCI operator?

Government Response: These operator calls shall be handled by an NMCI operator.

51. Question: Attachment 2 – Industry Standard Target Performance Measures - SLA: 1 - Who defines "High-end commercially available state-off-the-shelf workstation"?

Government Response: Offerors' proposals shall include their solution for each workstation, and may propose a mechanism for making the determination. As part of its evaluation, the Government will determine the value provided to it by each offer. Additionally, see the clause provided at 6.16 of Part Two for determination of refresh rates.

52. Question: Attachment 3 – Shore Rotation Requirements - Paragraph 4 - "Officers or senior enlisted personnel assigned to NMCI are provided to manage the military organization." Does this mean that Officers and senior enlisted personnel are restricted to "managing the military organization" or can they be assigned supervisory and leadership positions within the NMCI team? If Officers and senior enlisted are restricted to "managing the military organization" are the costs of any formalized training, to include travel, reimbursable as an ODC?

Government Response: The officers and senior enlisted (limited to 10% of the total assigned shore rotation personnel) are provided to supervise and manage uniform personnel work assignments and personnel issues. Further, these personnel will coordinate the interface between contractor and uniformed personnel. These are not provided for direct NMCI work assignment, and are required as a result of the prohibition against uniformed personnel reporting directly to contractors. Cost associated with these personnel are not expected to be separately priced.

53. Question: Attachment 3 – Shore Rotation Requirements – Paragraph 4: "The contractor shall ensure continuous and consistent professional progression for both enlisted and officer ranks during personnel shore rotation." What officer ranks and designators/MOS are expected to be assigned to NMCI? The RFP provides core competency data for enlisted personnel by NEC. What are the core competencies required for Officers?

Government Response: The senior enlisted personnel assigned conform to the core competencies, NEC's and MOS's listed in attachment 3. The ranks and officer designators are to be determined, but are expected to be consistent with current Navy and Marine Corps policy. These officers are expected to possess competencies consistent with the tasks described in the ICD (Attachment 10).

54. Question: ... However, the reader spec, found in Attachment 8, pages 3 to 7 is specific to one reader manufacturer. In fact, FEDSIM just published the same reader spec in the CBD on 12-20-99 for a separate procurement of smart card readers on behalf of the Navy. When it was pointed out to FEDSIM and that the spec was a duplicate of a specification sheet found on the Web site of a vendor named SCM Microsystems and its specific reader called the SwapSmart RS-232 Smart Card Interface reader, FEDSIM cancelled the procurement as restrictive.

Government Response: Attachment 8 has been reissued with relaxed specifications.

55. Question: For purposes of uniform evaluation among all bidders, will the Navy please provide Base Volumes for Contractors to bid against for Items 0006 (Wall Plug Service), 0012 (Mobile Phone Seats), 0013 (Personal Paging Service Seats), and 0034 (Satellite Terminal Support)?

Government response: Offerors should provide the price for one unit, and must clearly describe any assumptions made in their proposal.

56. Question: Solicitation Document Part One – Continuation of SF1449: "The configuration of the workstation and orderable options will be constructed on a case-by-case basis for each installation." Will the government request specific configurations by base or will they request specific configurations by command?

Government Response: Each data seat will include one or more orderable items which will be specified within the order.

57. Question: Solicitation Document Part Two – Contract Clauses, Terms and Conditions: Section 5.6 – Site Support: Section indicates that Encryption Devices and Crypto-Keying material are to be provided as GOVERNMENT FURNISHED EQUIPMENT (GFE). Request the Government confirm that all Type 1 encryption devices, including secure voice instruments, and associated keying material required for the successful implementation of NMCI shall be GFE and not to be included in the offeror's submitted pricing. Also request that the Government confirm that all required Type 1 encryption devices and associated test keying material required to support the NMCI Demonstration and Modeling Evaluation shall be GFE and provided to offeror's within the competitive range in sufficient time as to adequately prepare for the NMCI Demonstration and Modeling Evaluation.

Government Response: Type 1 cryptos, including secure voice products and keying material, will be provided as GFE.

58. Question: Solicitation Document Part Two – Contract Clauses, Terms, and Conditions - Sec 6.14.2 – Customer Satisfaction - "...industry average...": For the incentive payments tied to customer satisfaction, what is the industry average to be used, how and who determines it?

Government Response: Customer satisfaction will be measured using an industry best practices process. A survey format and method will be proposed by the contractor and approved by the Government.

59. Question: Attachment 17 – NMCI Service Sets – Section B: "The following describes eleven NMCI service sets." Attachment 17 refers to eleven Service Sets, there are only ten listed, also the attachment requests a Standalone Service Set. This service set is not mentioned anywhere else in the RFP, nor does it have a CLIN. Is this Service Set valid? Will the contractor have provide end-to-end performance for Standalone machines?

Government Response: A standalone service set or orderable item is not required. As indicated in Part Four, these sets are suggested to facilitate presentations, to provide a method of tracing each of the diverse services. They are not intended for any other purpose (including pricing and ordering). Please see the amended Attachment 17 (Amendment 0005).

60. Question: Item 0016 - What is the amount of File Share Services that should be included as a part of the basic NMCI service?

Government response: Offerors should propose the amount of file share services, sufficient to meet Attachment 2 service levels, to be provided.

61. Question: Page 1 of Attachment 2 states that "Performance of the network must be expressed in terms of measures that the NMCI vendor can control." Based on this premise, we recommend that the Government eliminate SLA 11, Performance Category 2, since "packet latency across the NIPRNET" is outside the control of the NMCI contractor.

Government's Response: Please see revised SLAs in Attachment 2.

62. Question: Please provide the URL for the information included in the ITSG and ITIA.

Government's Response: <http://www.doncio.navy.mil>

63. Question: 3.1.12 of Attachment One, Desktop Access to Legacy Applications. Please clarify this definition.

Government Response: The contractor is expected to provide end-user access to all existing legacy systems and applications in use by NMCI users at contract award. This service is expected to include all actions and infrastructure necessary to provide connectivity between system and end-users and legacy application host. However, re-engineering or hosting of legacy applications in NMCI-provided hardware is not included, unless ordered under Item 0029.

64. Question: Items 0034 and 0134, Satellite Terminal Support. Does this service include worldwide support?

Government Response: Yes. This item will provide world-wide support for support of DoN military operations.

Reference: Solicitation part 4, page 40 and part 5, page 55, DFARS 252.217-7002

65. Question: Under what conditions will the Government apply the requirements of this DFARS provision? Given that this is a competitively procured commercial solicitation, what is the Government's rationale for including this DFARS provision?

Government response: A decision regarding applicability of this provision will be made following receipt of proposals, depending on offerors' transition approaches. The Government does not wish to preclude offerors from replacing all existing infrastructure, in which case this provision would not apply.

Reference: Solicitation part 4, sections 1.3.7 Oral Presentation Slides and 1.4 Oral Presentation

66. Question: We understand that the Government will videotape the oral proposals as identified in this section 1.2 and as further elaborated in sections 1.3.7 and 1.4. As the videotape represents part of the formal record (See 1.3.7 where orals take precedence over any written slides which cannot be changed) can offerors get a copy of the videotape, including the question and answer session?

Government response: The Government will provide a copy of the oral proposals to Offerors which provide blank tapes at the time of proposal.

Reference: Solicitation part 2, paragraph 5.3, page 21, Cancellation Under Multi-year Contracts

67. Question: Some capitalized assets may have useful lives, for depreciation purposes, that extend beyond the end of the contract period. As currently worded, the restriction on cost recovery would deny the performing contractor the ability to recover unamortized depreciation costs that would normally be journalized from the balance sheet to the income statement after the end of the contract period. To alleviate this inequity, please amend item (iii) to delete the phrase "...entire multi-year contract period..." and replace it with the phrase "...useful life, for depreciation purposes, of the capitalized asset(s)..."

Government response: Cancellation payments will only be provided for unamortized portions of NMCI assets over the length of the contract.

Reference: Solicitation part 2, paragraph 6.9, page 29, and part 4, section 1.3.3, page 42, Small and Small Disadvantaged Subcontracting Participation

68. Question: With reference to the use of the word certified regarding business size, is self certification satisfactory for the purpose of qualifying businesses as small under SIC code series 73 or 48. At present Federal certification (by SBA) applies only to 8(a) and some SDB firms. A third party does not certify small and Woman-owned businesses. Instead, these firms self-certify as part of the proposal submission on a procurement-by-procurement basis. Please clarify the Government's intent for NMCI Contractors and our associated Small Businesses to formally certify in our proposal response. Has the Government obtained the necessary deviation to permit the contracting goals to include the identified tiers?

Government response: Self-certification is acceptable for the proposal. There is no "necessary deviation."

Reference: Solicitation Part 2 section 6.14.1 and Part 4 section 1.3.2

69. Question: Should the vendor assume that they are responsible for services only after the new hardware is installed over the first 18-month period? (i.e. Not responsible for business as usual costs). (ref. p.44 Factor One: Technical Approach).

Government response: Transition will occur in accordance with the transition plan incorporated into the resultant contract. However, as stated in paragraph 5.9 of Part Two, "The Contractor...will transition without loss of service to performance specified in the service agreement." Additionally, only when the contractor meets or exceeds the levels specified in Attachment 2 will it be compensated at 100%.

Reference: Solicitation part 2, paragraph 6.18, page 34, Associate Contractor Agreement

70. Question: In the event there is an Associate Contractor and a subsequent deferred award is made with 180 days to assume service delivery responsibility, how will the Deferred Contractor's terms, scope and pricing be adjusted to account for changes, different technical, transition or delivery approaches (e.g. 180 days versus 18 months; or different refresh commitments - which each have a direct implication).

Government response: The deferred contractor will be awarded a contract in accordance with its contract; that is, the terms, scope, and pricing will not be adjusted from its proposed, and accepted, contract, except for mutually agreed-to changes. The only change will be the length of contract, which will be the length remaining of the five year period.

71. Question: There are conflicting contractual provisions as to what type of contract will be awarded. Page 3 refers to the contract as firm fixed price, Paragraph 6.3 incorporates FAR 52.216-22 (Indefinite Quantity), and page 46 states the contract will be a "firm fixed price contract with performance incentives." Please state what type of contract will be awarded.

Government response: The resultant contract will be firm fixed priced. That is, there will be no adjustments to the price. However, performance incentives will be available. The quantities aren't specified in the contract; accordingly, it is also indefinite quantity.

72. Question: Explain what is meant by "any documentation" in Paragraph 1.2.2 which states "[t]his shall include any documentation being used by the Contractor to perform the services under this contract."

Government response: Any and all documentation that the Government or its third party would need to maintain and operate the NMCI shall be provided.

73. Question: Paragraph 1.2.2 grants the Government the option to purchase from the Contractor all or part of the equipment and related infrastructure being provided by the Contractor. The second to last paragraph of Paragraph 1.2.2 states that "[i]f the transition results from expiration, the Contractor will be reimbursed for all reasonable transition costs (i.e. costs incurred within the agreed period after contractor expiration that result from transition operations) and a reasonable profit." Does this quoted sentence mean that the Government, upon contract expiration, may take title to all equipment and related infrastructure without paying for the residual or net book value of such equipment?

Government response: As that section goes on to say, "In the event the Government so chooses, the Contractor shall transfer title to all such personal

property which the Government specifies AT A MUTUALLY AGREED UPON PRICE WHICH SHALL NOT EXCEED THE NET BOOK VALUE OF SUCH EQUIPMENT.”

74. Question: Paragraph 5.3 permits “Cancellation” of the contract. What is the difference between cancellation by the Government under Paragraph 5.3 and Termination for the Convenience of the Government under clause 52.212-4?

Government response: 5.3 provides for cancellation only due to the non-availability of appropriated funds.

75. Question: Explain what is meant by the Contractor’s “performance monitoring activities” and “data collection, measurement tools, and the report of service levels” in Paragraph 4.0 regarding the Government’s right to audit.

Government response: As payment will be based on the contractor’s data regarding services provided, the Government reserves the right to verify its data collection methods.

Reference: Solicitation Attachment 1, Statement of Objectives, Para 3.1.16, Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) Integration: states: " Requirement: The contractor shall provide for the integration of the DoD Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) Service, in compliance with DoN and DoD Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) security policies and guidelines. The Government will provide the contractor with the DoD PKI user profile as GFE to be implemented within NMCI. The DoD PKI Service includes directory support, device (e.g., Smart Card reader) support, registration and escrow of DoD PKI certificates, interface to related NMCI systems, hosting of PKI servers, and required key management services as well as PKI solutions for email, web applications, file transfer, and Virtual Private Networks. NMCI Security Requirements (Attachment 4) provide further detail for DoD PKI integration requirements."

76. Question: Does this mean that the contractor will be responsible for registration and escrow of certificates?

Government response: Yes.

Reference: Solicitation Pg 30, Para 6.9, Small and SDB Subcontracting Participation Plan (Mandatory): states: "...A company is considered small if the company is certified as small under either Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Code Series 73 or 48."

Solicitation Pg 30, Para 6.11, Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Code (Mandatory) states: "The SIC Code is 7379 -- Computer Related Service, Not Elsewhere Classified."

77. Question: Since the SIC Code Series referenced in para 6.9 includes Series 48 or 73, shouldn't Para 6.11 read the same?

Government response: The codes and series serve different purposes. The industrial classification code for the contract is 7379. However, for purposes of counting the 35% small business requirement, series 73 or 48 must be used.

78. Question: Solicitation Document Part Two – Contract Clauses, Terms, and Conditions - Sec 6.18 – Associate Contractor Agreement (ACA): Is the Information exchange only in the event of a transition to the deferred awardee or will this be an ongoing exchange?

Government Response: The purpose of the ACA is to provide such information as is necessary to “support a seamless transition of all NMCI operations” in the event that the deferred contractor is required to assume the NMCI prime contract. The specific terms and conditions which meet the seamless transition requirement are between the NMCI contractor and the deferred awardee.

Reference: Pricing

79. Question: Traditional commercial contracts that extend over 3 years typically contain provisions for Economic Price Adjustments or a Cost of Living Adjustment provision. Please identify the inflation assumptions that should be included in the pricing for purposes of proposal and evaluation

Government response: We expect the price per service to remain constant over the five year base contract period. The price proposed shall include any inflation assumptions made by the offeror.

80. Question: Attachment 10 - NMCI Interface Control Document (ICD) - Section 5.2.1 - General Description - “NMCI is responsible for ship’s fiber optic umbilicals. Each ship will have a unique umbilical.” Will the NMCI contractor be responsible for the acquisition, installation, and maintenance of shipboard umbilicals? What is meant by the statement “Each ship will have a unique umbilical.?” Does this simply mean that there will be one for each ship, or does it mean that each ship’s umbilical will be built to the specific requirements of that particular ship, to include unique construction, connectors, and media?

Government Response: It is the intention of the Navy to have the NMCI contractor be responsible for all the future service and provisioning of the ship umbilicals. This includes the acquisition, installation, operation, and maintenance of the umbilicals as well as all the infrastructure up to the interface (as defined in Attachment 10) to the skin of the ship. The contractor will be responsible for the transport of the services,

but the Navy still intends to provide services over the infrastructure to be operated and maintained by the NMCI contractor. The NMCI contractor shall provide an umbilical for every IT21 ship while pier side, including ships docked abreast. Specifications for the umbilical are provided in the NMCI ICD.

81. Question: Attachment 1 – SOO - Section 2.6 – External Networks - "DISA will provide DISN WAN SLAs necessary for the Offeror to reach decisions on design solutions that meet NMCI required service levels." Is each Offeror required to contact DISA individually to obtain this information? Is there a designated contact person in DISA who will provide this information? Is there a documented approach to obtain this information?

Government Response: DISA will not provide this information directly to offerors. All exchanges shall be through Ms. Joan Benning, the Contracting Officer, and any specific questions regarding use of the DISN can be forwarded to her at benningj@navsea.navy.mil.

82. Question: Explain what is meant by "refresh technology" in Paragraph 6.16 which states in part "[a]fter contract award, the Contractor shall independently refresh technology in the equipment and software at no change to the contract price."

Government response: "Technology refresh" means upgrade of existing equipment and/or software.

83. Question: Explain what is meant by "refresh rates" in Paragraph 6.16 which states in part "[i]n lieu of proposing specific refresh rates, the contractor may propose a mechanism for determining refresh rates dynamically based on Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and technology advances in the marketplace."

Government response: "Refresh rate" means time between "technology refresh" (also referred to as "refresh cycle)." Offerors shall provide exactly when they'll refresh the NMCI technology - e.g., "every x months," or an alternative mechanism for determining refresh (e.g., within x days of product/hardware/etc. becoming commercially available).

84. Question: *Solicitation, Pg 45, Para 1.3.7:* states: "Slides submitted with the written proposal may not be changed or altered for its oral presentation." Can the offerors make minor changes to the oral presentation slides between the written proposal due date and the oral presentation?

Government Response: The slides may not change between submission and the oral presentation.

Reference: *Solicitation, Attachment 4, Security Requirements, Para 1.2.2 Defense in Depth Framework*: requires Defense in Depth boundaries to be implemented to secure Communities of Interest (COIs).

85. Question: What Items are these boundaries applicable to?

Government Response: All provisioned resources and services are subject to Defense in Depth protections. Consequently, these boundaries are to be considered for all Items.

86. Question: What authoritative organization designates the existence and boundaries of DoN COIs?

Government Response: Generally, COI boundaries align with DON claimancies but there will be exceptions where COIs cross claimancies. PEO-IT is the responsible authority for purposes of NMCI COI determinations.

87. Question: Attachment 15 has no USMC identified requirements and the MCEN network is referred to as an external network. Are we to imply from this information that the contractor will not be supplying seats or building infrastructure for the USMC bases, camps, or stations (BCS) except for those buildings of the BCS where Navy users are ordering?

Government Response: No. The number of Marine Corps locations and approximate number of seats is provided in Table 57 (p. 159) and Appendix B (p. 200) of the DRM (Attachment 16).

88. Question: Solicitation Pg 27, FAR Clause 52.222-41, Service Contract Act of 1965 - This Clause is not checked as applicable to this contract. Is this Clause applicable to this contract? If not, is there some waiver to support its non-applicability?

Government response: The clause is not applicable and no waiver is required.

89. Question: Please describe the legacy server applications connectivity that should be included as a part of the basic NMCI service.

Government response: NMCI data seats shall include access to legacy applications (Attachment 1 para 2.1) and legacy systems currently in use by NMCI subscribers (Attachment 1 para 3.1.12). "Access" means "execution" of the application. Information regarding legacy applications can be found in section four of Attachment 16 (DRM). That section provides information regarding legacy

applications by regions, locations, number of seats, and major functions. Each offeror must provide its set of assumptions regarding legacy applications with its proposal.

90. Question: Paragraph 4.0 states that “Inspection and acceptance shall be performed at destination in accordance with the Contractor’s standard inspection and acceptance test procedures” and Paragraph 4.1. states that the “COR will sign an appropriate inspection and receiving document attesting to acceptance of services performed by the Contractor.” However, Paragraph 4.2 states that “[t]he COR’s acceptance of delivered services does not release the Contractor from liability to ensure that the services delivered are compliant to the order.” What is the significance of the Government’s acceptance if the Contractor is not released from liability and when will the Contractor be released from liability?

Government response: Although the Government accepts the services, payment is based on meeting or exceeding the service levels in Attachment 2.

91. Question: In developing a pricing model, should the offeror take into consideration existing software licenses and maintenance contracts and does the RFP assume the relationship with the contract holder(s) is required and software be provided as Government Furnished Equipment (GFE)?

Government Response: For purposes of the initial proposal, offerors shall assume no infrastructure exists.

92. Question: Attachment 18, Section 1.0 Overview: Several references are made to the offerors’ technical proposal. Is it correct to assume that this reference is synonymous with the technical approach submitted with its written proposal? Will the Government be specifying which facets of the technical approach should be demonstrated?

Government Response: The technical approach will be presented orally, and the references in Attachment 18 are the same as that technical proposal. See Attachment 18 for demonstration instructions.

93. Question: Attachment 18 - For planning purposes, when does the Government estimate that the details, requirements, specifications will be provided? How long will the offerors have between receipt of this necessary additional information and the start of the demonstration and modeling event?

Government Response: Please see the amended Attachment 18 for details regarding the demonstration. The Government cannot provide a specific timeline for

the demonstration, as it will depend on variables such as receipt of proposals, due diligence and transition plans. Further details will be provided at the start of discussions.

94. Question: Attachment 18: Will additional time be allowed for questions and answers related to receipt and review of the demonstration specifications and requirements?

Government Response: No.

95. Question: Attachment 18: Within which metropolitan or geographic area does the Government anticipate the referenced "...Government facilities will be located"?

Government Response: Please see the revised Attachment 18. Demonstrations will be conducted at the offeror's facility.

96. Question: Attachment 18, Sections 2.0 and 3.0: What is the Government's current estimate for the number of days' duration of the modeling activity to be performed at the Government's facility? What is the Government's current estimate for the number of days' duration for the demonstration activity to be performed as currently listed in subparagraphs a-e?

Government Response: Modeling and simulation of proposals is no longer required; please see the revised Attachment 18. The demonstration portion is expected to last no more than three days.

97. Question: Attachment 18: Does the Government anticipate that the modeling and demonstration activities will be conducted at the same time, even though they may occur at different locations?

Government Response: Modeling of proposals is no longer required; please see the revised Attachment 18 for demonstration activities.

98. Question: Attachment 18, Section 3.0 Modeling: How many days prior to the start of the modeling activity does the Government plan to provide offerors access to the referenced Government facilities?

Government Response: Modeling and simulation of proposals is no longer required; please see the revised Attachment 18.

99. Question: Solicitation, Part Four: Master Schedule: Regarding IOC, what is the maximum acceptable length of time from order to receipt of services at the desktop?

Government Response: Orders will specify the maximum acceptable length of time from order to receipt of services at the desktop. Offerors can propose alternate dates as part of their *optimal* proposal and transition plan with the understanding that they will be evaluated.

100. Question: Oral presentations: Will the Government determine breaks, or should the offeror plan to insert breaks during the oral presentations? Is the offeror permitted to submit a copy of the oral presentations on CD? In addition to the 10 personnel, will the Government allow our CEO to attend the oral presentation? Also, will the Government allow a person to operate the offeror's equipment? Can the Government describe the room where the presentation will be conducted – specifically, how large is the room? And for how long will the offeror be allowed to have access to the room before the presentation start time? Would a site survey be possible?

Government Response: In order to maintain the flow of presentations, offerors may determine breaks. However, be mindful to plan breaks which take the comfort and schedules of all present. Additionally, oral presentations will be scheduled from 0800 to 1430, including breaks, and therefore will not exceed six and a half hours. As stated in 1.4 of Part Four of the solicitation, "Offeror attendance is limited to ten people." Offerors are free to choose the ten participants (except the program manager must be the principal presenter, as provided in the solicitation), but will not be permitted to bring more than ten participants (including the CEO and equipment operator). The presentation room is large enough for all of the evaluators and ten offeror participants. The offeror will be provided access to the room one hour before presentation start time. Site surveys will not be provided. Oral presentation slides shall be presented on CD or floppy disks, with the written proposal (as provided in Part Four).

101. Question: Solicitation, Part Two, 6.17 Expertise Transition Requirement. "To the extent that any civilian Government employees are or will be incidentally displaced due to the NMCI initiative..." In the Government's evaluation, how many government employees may be displaced by the NMCI initiative? To your knowledge, are these employees currently subject to collective bargaining agreements?

Government Response: Statistics for the overall Navy show the number of personnel displaced by NMCI will be minimal. However, until the winning contractor's site survey and transition plans are available, government claimants will be unable to identify specific numbers and skill areas for of displaced persons. The minimum time period required after identification of the jobs displaced to identification of individuals to be displaced is 90 days. The government will provide specific information as soon as it is identified. Approximately 50% of the naval

government civilian employees belong to bargaining units. NMCI expects some displaced personnel to be bargaining unit members. Specifics of displaced personnel bargaining unit participation will only be available after transition plans are available.

102. Question: SLA 1, Mean Time between Failure based on a 3-year life cycle at 85%. What is the DoN definition of an operating system failure? Does this include lockups, blue-screen traps, reboots, or is it limited to OS reloads only?

Government Response: An operating system failure occurs when it fails to support the applications resident to a workstation or network. It can be a combination of hardware or operating system defects which renders a system inoperable, and cannot be limited to the situations described in the question.

103. Question: SLA 1, Mean Time between Failure based on a 3-Year life cycle at 85%: The B-Values and the 85% Probability requirements appear to be in conflict. Is it required "85% of the units will be working at the 3 year point without failing once"? Please state the desired reliability in terms of the total population of PC's (by level), providing the desired Availability, MTBF, and MTTR.

Government Response: Yes, during the three year life, the requirement is to achieve 85% probability no individual workstation will fail even one time. Our intent is for this criteria to apply to every workstation.

104. Question: SLA 21, Quality: Measurements of frames per second performance for common off the shelf software (COTS) are very difficult to determine. Does the government have a measurement process in place today to measure desktop video teleconferencing on a frames/second basis? If so, please provide information regarding the measurement tools, measurement processes and a list of COTS VTC products being monitored.

Government Response: The government does not have specific measurement process in place for measurement of desktop VTC's. The video quality measure is viewed as a critical performance consideration. The frames/sec metric is recommended as a representative quality measure. Offerors may propose alternative SLAs in their optimal proposal.

105. Question: SLA 21: Quality: Would the government accept as an alternate measure of Quality for VTC Services based on an average data transfer rate for a sample of Desktop VTC.

Government Response: Supplemental or alternative measures may be proposed in the offerors optimal proposals.

106. Question: SLA 29, subsection Disaster Recovery Plan Effectiveness. This measurement requires the supplier within one month of contract to submit for Government review the Disaster Recovery Plan for NMCI. The plan, at a minimum, will demonstrate the contractor's ability to recover a critical application at a remote site. Down time will not exceed 16 hours for basic and high end, and 8 hours for mission critical. Metric is percent compliance with target recovery time. B Values = 100%. Are there any other requirements, other than the minimum specified in the SLA Description, for the disaster Recovery Plan.

Government Response: No. There are no additional requirements beyond those expressed in this SLA.

107. Question: SLA 29 subsection Disaster Recovery Plan Effectiveness. This measurement requires the supplier within one month of contract to submit for Government review the Disaster Recovery Plan for NMCI. The plan, at a minimum, will demonstrate the contractor's ability to recover a critical application at a remote site. Down time will not exceed 16 hours for basic and high end, and 8 hours for mission critical. Metric is percent compliance with target recovery time. B Values = 100%. What is the definition of a remote site?

Government Response: A definition of remote site can be found in Attachment 16 (DRM), paragraph 4.7.7.

108. Question: SLA 29 subsection Disaster Recovery Plan Effectiveness. This measurement requires the supplier within one month of contract to submit for Government review the Disaster Recovery Plan for NMCI. The plan, at a minimum, will demonstrate the contractor's ability to recover a critical application at a remote site. Down time will not exceed 16 hours for basic and high end, and 8 hours for mission critical. Metric is percent compliance with target recovery time. B Values = 100%. Are mission critical applications part of the Legacy System Support service described in the SOO page 14? If so, would it be appropriate to provide a Disaster Recovery Plan one month following the acceptance by the government of a price for support of a legacy system which was given following an order from the DoN for this optionally priced service?

Government Response: Yes, a supplemental plan consistent with the overall NMCI Disaster Recovery Plan may be provided one month following legacy system order.

109. Question: Attachment 1, NMCI Statement of Objectives, page 2 - The RFP states, "NMCI will provide transport for IT21 and the MCEN NOC." Attachment 10 gives the impression that these NOCs are not connected to DISN today. Will we have to build additional infrastructure using commercial methods, or will we coordinate this activity through DISN? Does this mean using DISN as the transmission medium?

Government Response: The NOCs are connected to the DISN via NIPRNET and SIPRNET, and the DISN will be used as the transmission medium. The PCO will coordinate any activities requiring use of the DISN.

110. Question: Attachment 18 – NMCI Demonstration and Modeling Evaluation - Section 2 – Demonstration Paragraph C: Is the DISN going to be made available for the demonstration? Attachment 18 states we must demonstrate interoperability and interface compliance with specifications described in the NMCI Interface Control Document. Are there any modeling artifacts that capture the architecture, performance, and service levels of DISN that DoN can make available to offerors? If so, are these in formats directly usable with the MIL3 OPNET communications modeling tool that you specify for performance and scalability evaluation, to what extent have government models of DISN been validated, are any of the modeling artifacts classified, and when is the soonest that they could be provided to offerors?

Government Response: Please see the revised Attachment 18; references to modeling and interface compliance with specifications described in the NMCI Interface Control Document have been removed. Given that, DISN will not be made available for the demonstration. In accordance with the solicitation, Offerors are required to support the demonstration with their currently managed infrastructure. DISN modeling information will not be provided.

111. Question: Paragraph 2.6 of Attachment 1 - The RFP states that "DISA will provide DISN WAN SLAs necessary for the Contractor to reach decisions on design solutions that meet NMCI required service levels." When will this information be provided?

Government's response: For proposal purposes, offerors shall use the Functional Requirements Specification attached to the below listed DISN contracts' Statement of Work (SOW):

DCA200-97-D-0054 applies to DISN Video Services-Global

DCA200-96-D-0096 applies to DISN Switched/Bandwidth Manager Services - CONUS

DCA200-97-D-0048 applies to DISN Transmission Service – CONUS
For a copy of these documents, please request by email to Joan Benning at
benningj@navsea.navy.mil.

As the solicitation states, ... all offerors determined by the Contracting Officer to be within the competitive range will be afforded the opportunity to characterize the DISN by direct measurement of DISN performance during due diligence, in order to better determine the effort required to design, fabricate and assemble their proposed NMCI network architecture, and to determine what portions of the Navy's existing IT infrastructure (if any) and the DISN might be effectively used in the NMCI infrastructure to meet the NMCI SLAs. On the basis of this assessment, offerors will then submit final revised pricing proposal for Alternatives 1 and 2, and an alternative "best value" proposal if desired, based upon the DISN performance as determined by offeror characterization.

112. Question: Is it acceptable to integrate legacy systems so that they meet the SLAs and provide the best value for video and data seats?

Government Response: In accordance with the solicitation, "..., all existing infrastructure ... may be made available for use by the Contractor in providing the complete IT infrastructure." Offerors are to propose architectural solutions, to include legacy infrastructure or not as the offeror deems appropriate, that meet the SLAs.

113. Question: *Solicitation Pg 14, Item 0027:* states: "...This item covers connectivity for application servers above and beyond the legacy server applications included as a part of the NMCI basic services and provides NMCI connectivity to applications servers that are added to the network after baseline services are established.

Item 0027AA (and 0127AA if option is exercised): Low bandwidth Application
Item 0027AB (and 0127AB if option is exercised): Medium bandwidth Application
Item 0027AC (and 0127AC if option is exercised): High bandwidth Application"

How does the Government define low, medium, and high bandwidth?

Government response: The Government expects to employ three broad classes of servers: mainframe, application/mid-tier, and workgroup. Specific bandwidth values are not specified for each of these classes. Offerors are to propose definitions for low, medium and high bandwidth appropriate for the broad classes of servers to be supported. Please see the legacy applications description in section four of Attachment 16 (DRM). Additionally, offerors should provide their assumptions regarding these legacy applications in their proposals.

114. Question: The Government has stated “We are expecting offerors to propose an NMCI solution. We specifically want offerors to propose a solution which provides to us the best value. The decision to maintain current systems or transition is the offerors.” Is this in conflict with the RFP direction to assume that no infrastructure exists?

Government Response: The solicitation is consistent in this regard. Offerors are to assume, for initial proposal purposes, that no DON infrastructure exists and that the DISN performs in accordance with the Functional Requirements Specification attached to the below listed DISN contracts’ Statement of Work (SOW):

DCA200-97-D-0054 applies to DISN Video Services-Global

DCA200-96-D-0096 applies to DISN Switched/Bandwidth Manager Services - CONUS

DCA200-97-D-0048 applies to DISN Transmission Service – CONUS

Following due diligence, offerors will have the opportunity to adjust their initial pricing proposal to reflect the **offeror’s** proposed use of existing DON IT infrastructure and the DISN. It is up to the offeror to determine the extent to which DON IT infrastructure in Alternatives 1 and 2, and the best value proposal, if any, will be used. It is also up to the offeror to determine the extent to which the DISN will be used for Alternative 2 and an optimal proposal, if any.

115. Question: SLA 29, subsection Disaster Recovery Plan Effectiveness. This measurement requires the supplier within one month of contract to submit for Government review the Disaster Recovery Plan for NMCI. The plan, at a minimum, will demonstrate the contractor's ability to recover a critical application at a remote site. Down time will not exceed 16 hours for basic and high end, and 8 hours for mission critical. Metric is percent compliance with target recovery time. B Values = 100%. What are the requirements for demonstrating the ability to recover a critical application at a remote site?

Government Response: In accordance with the solicitation, “ Offerors should demonstrate their understanding of the requirements of the solicitation and provide approaches for meeting those requirements.” How the offeror demonstrates their understanding and explains their approach to satisfy SLA 29, is up to the offeror.

116. Question: SLA30 Performance Category 3: Report Integrity. The measurement description of this SLA focuses on the number of capacity planning reports; however, the SLA frequency involves network performance data gathered according to requirements for the model. Please clarify what is to be measured and what is the model?

Government Response: The model and the performance data referred to in SLA 30 Performance Category 3 are the same model and performance data required by the Offeror to perform capacity planning in accordance with SLA 30 Performance

Category 1. The offeror is to determine the model to be used and the performance data to be gathered to support capacity planning. The intent of SLA 30 Performance Category 3 is to assure complete and timely reporting of agreed upon capacity planning information.

117. Question: SLA32 Performance Category 4: Throughput. Please clarify what and how this SLA is to be measured?

Government Response: Throughput is considered to be actual, utilized bandwidth. Specific measurement approach is to be determined by the offeror.

118. Question: SLA 1, Mean Time between Failure based on a 3-Year life cycle at 85%: Level 3 B Value specifies 30,000 hours. This represents more hours of availability achievable in a 3 year period (3 Years X 365 Days X 24 Hours = 26,280) than possible. Based on actual measurements, commercially available operating systems (exclusive of any other software/hardware failures) experience a reboot once per week for Windows/NT and once per shift for Windows 98. Allowing 15 minutes for reboot of Windows NT, the best theoretical availability for Windows/NT over 3 years would be 99.85% assuming 100% performance of all other hardware/software components. Based upon this information, please clarify the expectation for the B Value for each level of service.

Government Response: SLA 1 Performance Category 3 MTBF will be deleted. Offerors are to provide insight the MTBF and MTTR assumed in their proposed approach to meeting SLA 1 Performance Category 2 Availability.

119. Question: Will room size/configuration permit use of a rear projection system?

Government Response: No, the room configuration will not permit use of a rear projection system.

120. Question: If we bring two technicians to operate the audio/visual (AV) projection system, will these non-presenter personnel count against the 10-person limit?

Government Response: Yes, they will count against the 10-person limit.

121. Question: When will the AV technicians be permitted to set up the equipment? Will it be possible to do so the day before the presentation?

Government Response: The room will be open one hour before the presentation start time. No, it will not be possible to do it the day before the presentation.

122. Question: When will the Government notify offerors of their Oral Presentation dates?

Government Response: As the solicitation states, the order will be determined following receipt of proposals. So, the Government will notify offerors of their oral presentation dates after 14 February, and they will be scheduled to begin no later than a week after 14 February.

123. Question: Please provide a copy of the current and future organizational structure for the Director of Navy Marine Corps Intranet and staff.

Government Response: The organizational structure will vary depending upon the successful NMCI solution. Therefore, the organizational structure will not be provided.

124. Question: Part 1, Table One and Two: Will the Government provide additional detail on what quantities will be used to calculate an extended price per Item? Specifically, should the pricing assumption for extending the monthly price of Item 0001 for the Item Price/Program Year column be the Monthly Item Price column multiplied by which of the three quantity columns: 40,916; 200,000; or 253,000? Please provide specific guidance since the extended column could be calculated using various assumptions which could greatly affect the overall price. If the table is extended to permit for the calculation of each year separately, please identify the assumption as to when the specific quantities will be ordered since the installation and billing for Item 0001 in FY01, 200,000 machines in October will result in a significantly different price than if the quantities would be installed in the following September.

Government Response: The Government intends to pay the same price over the first five year period per item, per month. So, following IOC, that number in the price/program year should be the item price times twelve. Prior to IOC, the quantity per month will be in accordance with the agreed upon transition plan.

125. Question: Part Four, Section 1.3.5: For the upgrade Items (0007/0107 and 0008/0108), will the contractor be allowed to modify the pricing tables to provide for additional Items to address Items 0001 through 0004 separately? These four seat configurations (0001 through 0004) differ in base cost and as a result differ in upgrade costs.

Government Response: The offeror may propose additional upgrade items in its alternate proposal; however, the Government will evaluate the proposed structure to determine its value to us.

126. Question: Although the pricing of the solution has called for a “no infrastructure” solution, the transition plan requires an approach that covers an as-is state. As it is impracticable to price the unknown and undefined aspects of the existing environment, please acknowledge that the Government recognizes that NO transition costs have been calculated into the offers associated with transition from the as-is environment or the evaluation and integration of unknown and unspecified applications. The expectation is that either through due diligence prior to the award (to deal with transition from the as-is state) or prior to the release of an order (for applications on applications servers since they are optional in scope) that pricing and terms would be addressed at that time.

Government Response: The Government acknowledges that no transition costs will be proposed with initial offers. However, we also acknowledge (through the pass/fail criterion) that the offerors will have had significant experience transitioning users from an as-is to a proposed to-be state. Accordingly, we expect to see your transition approach with the initial proposals. Final prices, including transition, will be provided following due diligence.

127. Question: In order to be as responsive as possible to the Government’s schedule for awarding the NMCI contract, it would be extremely helpful for the Government to publish an amendment with a new schedule showing the impact of the two-week delay in proposal submission on the remainder of the major milestones in this opportunity. In addition to submitting the proposal on the 14th of February, we are interested in seeing what activities will be scheduled and when. Please provide a tentative schedule for:

Orals:
Competitive Range Determination:
Pre-Award Demonstration and Site Visits:
Due Diligence
Submission of Revised Proposals

Government Response: The schedule was not provided in the original solicitation; there is nothing to amend. A detailed schedule will not be provided.

128. Question: Contractor requests positive consideration be given to authorizing one technician who operates the audio video equipment for the presentation as an addition to the ten individuals allowed in the room during NMCI oral presentations.

Government Response: Each offeror is permitted to bring a total of ten people.

129. Question: Throughout the NMCI solicitation, the word “infrastructure” is used interchangeably yielding questions as to its true definition. The solicitation reads in part,

“Initial proposals shall address all requirements of the solicitation and assume no infrastructure exists within DoN.” Does infrastructure specifically refer to network infrastructure only, or does it refer to the entire IT infrastructure including fixed workstations, portables, servers, network circuits, hubs, routers, switches, voice seats, PBXs, Codex’s and all related software licenses?

Government Response: Infrastructure refers to the entire IT infrastructure.

130. Question: Within the NMCI solicitation, under Part Four, 1.4 Oral presentation, subfactor (2) Transition Approach it states: “Offerors shall include detailed descriptions of ... Strategy to migrate from existing networks to the proposed NMCI without loss of service, Etc. In order to be compliant with this mandate and the “no existing infrastructure” assumption and still provide a realistic transition scenario, is it the Government’s intention that the transition requirements should be addressed from the “as is” environment to the IOC/FOC environment?”

Government Response: Yes; the Government’s intention is for the transition requirement to address the “as is” state.

131. Question: Section 1.4 of Part Four states that a question and answer period will be held with the offeror following the day of oral presentations. Will questions pertaining to cost and pricing be raised by the Government during this question and answer session?

Government Response: The Government intends to only ask questions pertaining to the offeror’s oral presentation. Therefore, only if an offeror addresses segments of its price proposal in its oral presentation will the Government ask questions regarding the oral presentation of that information.

132. Question: The demonstration requirement for offerors proposed billing procedures were deleted from Attachment 18. Will the requirement also be deleted from Part Five, Paragraph b of due diligence and revised proposals?

Government Response: The requirement will not be deleted from Part Five. In accordance with the solicitation, during the oral presentations offerors will describe their approach to billing and auditing procedures and intervals. During the demonstration (which will be scheduled during due diligence), the offeror will demonstrate an operational billing system. Please note that the Government’s evaluation of the technical proposal, in accordance with Part Five of the solicitation, may be revised based on the results of this demonstration.

133. Question: Attachment 18, Section 3.5.3: Demonstration Item Checklist: The Government states that “The checklist will list all items to be demonstrated, both mandatory, minimal, and enhancements that were mentioned in Section 3.2 and elsewhere in the RFP.” As stated, the Government will provide demonstration procedures to offerors in the competitive range. Will these procedures identify the mandatory and minimal items required by the Government to be demonstrated?

Government Response: No, all requirements for the demonstration are in the solicitation and Attachment 18. The procedures referred to in paragraph 3 of Attachment 18 are those regarding administrative aspects of the demonstration.

134. Question: Attachment 18, Section 3.5.2 DoD Manual 5200.40-M (draft) contains amplified guidance on the contents of the SSAA. Please provide a copy of this manual.

Government Response: The manual can be found on the NMCI web site under the information documents button.

135. Question: The solicitation indicates that first, second, and third tier subcontracts planned for award to small businesses certified under the 73 or 48 series of the SIC codes may be included for purposes of meeting the 35% requirement. Does this mean that SDB and WOSB also must be only SIC codes 73 and 48 since the SDB 5% and WOSB 5% would count toward the SB goal of 35%?

Government Response: Yes, all small and small disadvantaged businesses must be certified as small under the 73 or 48 series, including woman-owned small businesses.

136. Question: Attachment 18, Section 3.0 Modeling (c): Regarding the interoperability demonstration, will the Government provide access and authorization for offerors to use these GFE networks, including classified requirements, at the offerors' demonstration location, or is it the Government's intention that this portion of the demonstration be conducted at an existing Government facility? If it is the intention to provide access at the offerors location, how much time will the Government provide to offerors to order and install these networks within the demonstration location?

Government Response: No GFE networks will be provided for the demonstration. In accordance with the solicitation, “the offerors shall utilize the offeror's currently managed infrastructure to facilitate this demonstration reflective of the offeror's technical approach. This demonstration must be independently verifiable by DoN-identified personnel.” Additionally, Attachment 18 states “The Offeror shall present the demonstration at a mutually agreed-to managed site of the Offeror's choosing.”

137. Question: Attachment 16 – Para 4.7.5: The solicitation states that NMCI should “provide connectivity only to the pier head distribution points, the Fleet NOC, and Joint Forces Tactical Operation Center (JFTOC). Basic services for the pier side and afloat/deployed units and for OCONUS units will be provided by the Base Level Infrastructure Improvement (BLII) and IT-21 programs.” The interface point between NMCI and BLII appears to be the fleet NOC and JFTOC because it is our understanding that BLII addresses pier head, pier head distribution points, and connectivity back to the Fleet NOC and JFTOC. Therefore, should connectivity be only to the Fleet NOC and JFTOC? After award of NMCI, will basic services for pier side and afloat/deployed units shift from the BLII to the NMCI contracts?

Government Response: Refer to the ICD (attachment 10). Services will be provided to the fleet NOC and JFTOC as they will be connected to the pier. At the pier, the connection to the ship will be made via an umbilical connection. NMCI Basic services for Pier side and afloat units will reside at the NOC/JFTOC and transport will be down to and including the Umbilical connection. The NMCI contractor will be responsible for all the future service and provisioning of the ship’s umbilicals including the acquisition, installation, operation, and maintenance of the umbilicals as well as all the infrastructure up to the interface (as defined in the ICD) to the skin of the ship. The contractor will be responsible for the transport of the services but the Navy still intends to provide services over the infrastructure to be operated and maintained by the NMCI contractor. The NMCI contractor shall provide an umbilical for every IT21 ship. Specifications for the umbilical are provided in the NMCI ICD.

138. Question: Relative to termination charges and cancellation charges, how do the elements of recoverable termination charges and cancellation charges as defined in Paragraph 5.3 differ? Please confirm that the Contractor may include in any termination claim, including cancellation under Multi-Year Contracts that lease commitments and/or termination charges associated with the termination of the leases may be recovered and that the hardware and software provided under this contract are not included in the definition of infrastructure contained in the cancellation under multi-year contracts provision. Please conform the provisions to be consistent with your response.

Government Response: Payment under the termination for convenience provision applies if the contract or any part thereof is terminated solely for the convenience of the Government. Convenience termination costs may include reasonable charges that the contractor can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Government have resulted from the termination. The contractor shall not, however, be paid for any costs incurred which reasonably could have been avoided. The costs of lease commitments, lease termination charges, hardware, and/or software that satisfy these criteria are potentially allowable as termination charges.

The “Cancellation Under Multi-Year Contracts” clause applies if the Government cancels all its requirements for all services in all program years (including option

years) subsequent to that in which cancellation occurs. The cancellation charge will only cover costs that would have been equitably amortized over the entire multi-year contract period if not for the cancellation. The costs of lease commitments, lease termination charges, hardware, and/or software that satisfy this criterion are potentially allowable as cancellation charges. In the event of cancellation the Government would not, however, pay for the remaining useful commercial life of facilities or infrastructure, including hardware and/or software.

139. Question: Attachment 18, Section 1: The Government states in part that the offerors will ...build a demonstration of a specified NMCI sub network. How and when will the Government specify the referenced NMCI sub network for offerors to build and demonstrate?

Government Response: Consistent with Attachment 18, the Government's intent is for offerors to provide a demonstration of a representative sub network to the offeror's specification.

140. Question: Attachment 18, Section 1: Amendment 0005 seemingly deleted the modeling component of the activity, yet reference is still made to "simulation runs in order to demonstrate the ability to design and implement an NMCI service that meets the Government's SLA requirements for a specified subnet when stimulated by stressors similar to those described in the DRM." Since this is stated in the overview section, is it the Government's expectation that this will be accomplished via network modeling and simulation using OPNET or similar tools?

Government Response: The Government has no expectations regarding how the demonstration will be accomplished beyond those expressed in the solicitation and Attachment 18.

141. Question: SLA 29, Subsection Disaster Recovery Plan Effectiveness. This measurement requires the supplier within one month of contract to submit for Government review the Disaster Recovery Plan for NMCI. The plan, at a minimum, will demonstrate the contractor's ability to recover a critical application at a remote site. Down time will not exceed 16 hours for basic and high end, and 8 hours for mission critical. Metric is percent compliance with target recovery time. B Values = 100%. What is the definition of a critical application? How are critical applications linked with basic, high-end and mission critical devices? Can mission critical applications serve multiple seat types (basic, high-end and mission critical)? If so, what is the recovery time based upon?

Government Response: (a) Critical as used in this SLA means a representative high availability mission related application required by a mission critical activity to perform its mission.

- (b) Critical applications are directly tied to the activity responsible for maintaining the information data and performing the related mission.
 - (c) Activities other than mission critical activities may have access to mission critical applications; however, for the purposes of the Disaster Recovery Plan, only mission critical delivery points will be required to meet the metric.
 - (d) Recovery times are based on equivalent industry best practices.
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Reference: Solicitation Part 1, Item 0034

142. Question: Is the offeror expected to provide satellite space segment or will it be provided by the Government?

Government Response: The contractor must provide this.

143. Question: What geographical areas will the satellite service be required to operate in?

Government Response: Ground earth-stations selected by the contractor and satellite circuits placed on-call shall provide coverage of at least two T-1 circuits globally, to any land-mass between 60 degrees south and 70 degrees north latitude, with coverage of at least six T-1 circuits to any land-mass between 35 degrees south and 60 degrees north, with a total of ten of these circuits called up at any one time. The contractor may use multi-hop circuits or earth-stations outside of CONUS at the contractors discretion to establish this coverage.

144. Question: Do these areas encompass the oceans as well as land masses?

Government Response: These areas encompass the land masses.

145. Question: Is the 45 Mbs bandwidth a total for all operating service areas? If so, what is the maximum bandwidth required for a single area?

Government Response: 45Mbs is objective for distant future, and is unrealistic given current equipment strings. Total bandwidth required is 10 T-1 circuits, or equivalents, called up as described in the response to question 143.

146. Question: Does the offeror have to provide Gateways for the satellite services or does the Government intend to use existing CONUS gateways on the east and west coast? If existing gateways are to be used, please identify which ones?

Government Response: Satellite circuit call-up shall be established as an on-call fee-based service, available within the stated timeline. The contractor shall establish arrangements and procedures to extend the NMCI to tactically deployed units. The arrangements shall include offeror provision of all equipment and interfaces required to connect to USMC TDN interfaces. The interface shall be connected via call-up satellite circuits through existing commercial ground earth-stations (as well as required terrestrial back-haul circuits). The terminating equipment for this service will be mobile earth-stations, either government provided USMC STAR-Ts (using C or Ku band), or offeror provided commercial terminals. The terminating equipment will be determined by the requestor at the time service is requested. The offeror shall be prepared to support either option.

147. Question: If a particular satellite region can not reach the CONUS gateway, is a double hop allowed or must fiber be used?

Government Response: The contractor may use multi-hop circuits or earth-stations outside of CONUS at the contractors discretion to establish the coverage described above.

148. Question: It is our understanding that none of the listed Government terminals (Items 0034 and 0134) support data rates higher than 8.2 Mbps. What is the source of the 45 Mbps requirement?

Government Response: 45Mbps is objective for distant future, and is unrealistic given current equipment strings. Total bandwidth required is 10 T-1 circuits, or equivalents, called up as described in the response to question 143.

149. Question: Is it an aggregate of multiple carriers to multiple remote terminals? If so, how may remote terminals be deployed at any one time and what is the maximum data rate required to support each one?

Government Response: Up to 10 independent T-1s. This service can be called up as multiple T-1s to a single terminal, or single/fractional T-1s to multiple terminals.

150. Question: In addition, the list of Government terminals requires service in multiple bands, including EHF. Is it the Government's intent that contractors provide simultaneous services on different satellite bands?

Government Response: The intent of this Item was to establish the provision of commercial on-call satellite circuits that would be provided by the contractor, upon notification by the USMC. Terminating equipment could either be USMC terminals, or commercial mobile terminals, based on service level request from USMC. The USMC terminal that could be used as

termination for this service will be the AN/TSC-156(V)3 operating in C or Ku bands. The reference to the satellite terminal that handles EHF was for information only. It is the Government's intent that the offeror propose connectivity equivalent to up to 10 T1 circuits. The offeror shall provide this service in either C or Ku band.

151. Question: Is it also the Government's intent that the contractor provide compatibility for multiple satellite bands in one single terminal?

Government Response: No. With a contractor provided mobile earth terminal, we have called this up as an end-to-end service and at that point, it's immaterial to the Government which frequency band the service is being provided on.

152. Question: Question: For planning purposes, how and when does the Government expect the due diligence period to proceed?

Government Response: We expect due diligence to start around the fifteenth of March, and to end around the first of May. When oral presentation notifications are sent out, offerors will be requested to provide the following in writing at their oral proposal. The information will not be evaluated, and is for Government planning purposes only:

Assuming a start date of 15 March and an end date of 1 May, please provide the following information in writing to Ms. Joan Benning following your oral presentation. The information will not be evaluated, and is for planning purposes only:

- A list of all sites you intend to visit
 - A schedule of when you wish to visit each listed site
 - Desired circumstances (exactly what you wish to see, how much time you desire at each site, support requirements, etc.)
 - Number of offeror teams; number of members on each team
-

Reference: Amendment 0007

152. Question: What role did Gartner Group have in the development and review of the Solicitation?

Government Response: Development of the requirements is an inherently governmental function which was performed entirely by the Department of Navy. The government solicited and received many recommendations from industry regarding draft versions of these requirements and made certain revisions as a result of such

recommendations. Gartner reviewed the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) developed by the Government and provided comments regarding the degree to which each SLA was consistent with standard practice within private industry. Similar comments were also solicited and received from other representatives of private industry.

153. Question: What mitigation terms or provisions are in place to protect the source selection sensitivity associated with the role of Gartner Group?

Government Response: Not applicable. See amendment 0008 which removes Gartner Group from any participation in the evaluation process.

154. Question: What role is expected for Gartner Group in the evaluation and scoring of the proposals?

Government Response: None. See amendment 0008.

155. Question: How many teams have been exposed to Gartner Groups participation?

Government Response: If this question refers to potential offerors, we have no knowledge in this area.

156. Question: Has Gartner participated in the preparation of the evaluation and solicitation team and if so, to what extent?

Government Response: Gartner has had no input with regard to source selection. The evaluation will be conducted by the contracting officer, the Source Selection Advisory Council, and the Source Selection Evaluation Board. Gartner has not briefed not prepared these groups in any manner with respect to the evaluation of proposals.

157. Question: What role did Gartner Group have in the development of the evaluation model?

Government Response: The source selection plan and evaluation criteria were developed entirely by the Government. The Government however does have a license for the Gartner Total Cost of Ownership Model and appropriate portions of it will be used by the Government to assist Government personnel to determine a Government estimate of total ownership cost for NMCI.

158. Question: Are the advisory services and information provided to potential offerors by the other divisions of the Gartner Group in any way related to, or in connection with, the NMCI procurement?

Government Response: As answered in question 155 we have no specific information regarding Gartner's contractual relationships with potential NMCI offerors nor the subject matter of these arrangements. Notwithstanding their involvement as described

in answers to questions 152 and 157, Gartner has not participated in the deliberative process nor have they had access to source selection sensitive information.